

PUBLIC NOTICE OF APPLICATION
FOR COASTAL WETLANDS PERMIT
AND WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) has filed an application with the Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) requesting permission to conduct regulated activities under the provision of the Coastal Wetlands Protection Law Act, Title 49, Chapter 27, Mississippi Code of 1972.

The proposed project is a component of the Phase IV Early Restoration Project – Restoring Living Shorelines and Reefs in Mississippi Estuaries. The applicant states that the project will partially restore natural resources and their services injured by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill by restoring lost benthic secondary biological productivity. The proposed project location is Graveline Bay in Jackson County.

The applicant is proposing to construct a maximum of 10 acres of subtidal reef habitat and 2 acres of intertidal reef habitat within a 14.3-acre site along the southern shoreline of Graveline Bay through the placement of graded stone (limestone or granite), processed concrete aggregate, native or fossilized oyster shell or other similar material in undulating ridges varying in thickness from 0.2 foot to 1.0 foot in height. Current water depths in the proposed project area vary from 0.0 foot to -1.5 feet below Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW) and the maximum height of the reef material would be 0.5 feet above MLLW.

The applicant is requesting permission to perform maintenance on the reefs as needed during the duration of the permit.

The applicant has requested a variance to MDMR's Guidelines for Regulated Activities, specifically to Chapter 8, Section 2, Part III.O.1. of the Mississippi Coastal Program (MCP) which states, "Permanent filling of coastal wetlands because of potential adverse and cumulative environmental impacts is discouraged", and to Miss. Admin. Code Title 22, Part 23, Chapter 8, Section 114.01 which states, "Permanent filling of coastal wetlands below the mean high tide line because of potential adverse and cumulative environmental impacts

is not authorized”, and has justified these requests under Chapter 8, Section 2, Part I.E.2.c.i. of the MCP and Miss. Admin. Code Title 22, Part 23, Chapter 8, Section 118.01 by stating that the impacts to Coastal Wetlands would be no worse than if the Guidelines were followed because it meets several of the goals of the MCP.

This public notice, project diagrams, and a copy of the full project application may be accessed by clicking the links below. A copy can also be mailed upon request.

In compliance with Section 401 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251, 1341), as amended by PL 95-217, the applicant will request certification from the Office of Pollution Control that the above mentioned activity will be in compliance with applicable provisions of Section 301 (33 U.S.C. 1311), Section 302 (33 U.S.C. 1312), Section 303 (U.S.C. 1313), Section 306 (U.S.C. 1316), and Section 307 (U.S.C. 1317) of the Act and appropriate requirements of the State Law.

Any person wishing to make comments on or objections to the proposed regulated activity must submit those comments in writing to the Department of Marine Resources by mail to 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530; by fax to 228-374-5008; or by email to willa.brantley@dmr.ms.gov before 1:00 p.m. on the day August 9, 2019.